

MAY 2014

KATH BAAT

Let's Talk



The Political
Melodrama
Unraveled!



The team behind "Kath-Baat" has always felt a need for a weblog, an online portal or a platform where people land to read or write, or to discuss topics which concern them. We felt a need for a publishing place where newbies get a chance to speak out. A platform where things are published without any real censorship. A platform with liberal free-thinkers backing it. With these ideals in our mind we came up with "Kath Baat".

"Kath" (کٲٲ) is a Kashmiri word having a variety of meanings. It can mean "word", "talk", "secret" or a "story" depending upon the context it is used in. "Baat" (ٲٲٲ/ٲٲٲ) is a Urdu/Hindi translation of the word "kath". The word "kathbaath" (کٲٲ ٲٲٲ) whose suffix "baath" is a slight variant of "baat" however means "conversation", "discussion", "gossip" or "interaction" depending upon the context it is used in. After a lot of negotiations, the team arrived at this name for the online portal.

Kathbaat provides you with information on subjects ranging from "Art and Culture" to "Science and Technology", from "History and Politics" to "Religion to Philosophy" and from "Fiction" to "Health and Lifestyle". We invite you to read and write from and for "Kathbaat" and help us build this online forum.



CONTENTS

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY/ RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Atheism Under The Light Of Logic & Science 3

HEALTH & LIFESTYLE

"No" to "Fresh" Fruit Juice Shops! 5

ART & CULTURE

Marriage in Islam 7

REVIEWS

Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy - A Review 8

FICTION

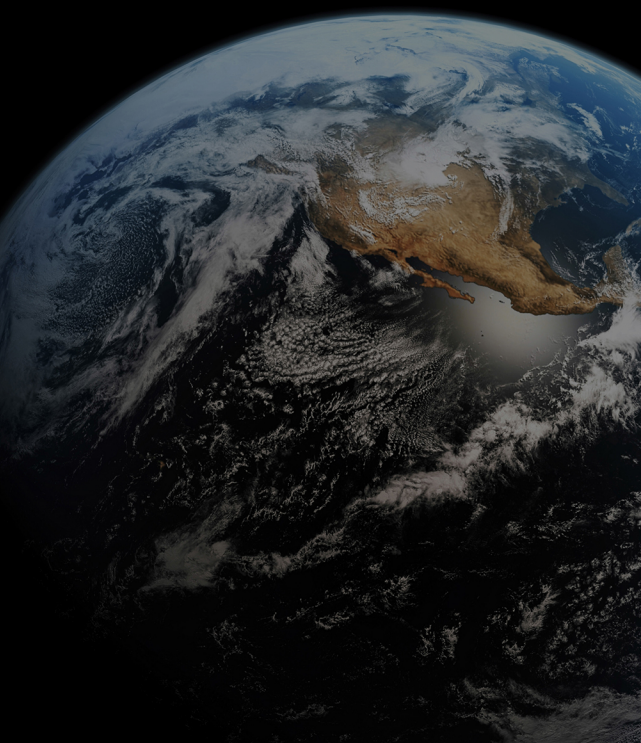
A Silent Engagement 9

KATHBAAT SPECIAL

The Political Melodrama Unraveled! 11

MEET THE TEAM

Meet The Team 13



Atheism Under The Light Of Logic & Science

By Fuzail Ahmad

The philosophy of Atheism in its fundamental sense tends to laud rationale and logic, but is actually considerably irrational. Its propagators and proponents tend to put a lot of stock in "empirical methods" and "logical" arguments but its core stays away from rational thought and logic. In this work, we shall analyze the rationale to renounce and denounce the essence of atheism.

To start with, atheists, sadly, don't realize that by adhering to an empirical method one can never disprove God's existence because in order to disprove existence of God experimentally, one ought to possess comprehensive knowledge of everything. In other words, one ought to be omniscient, which consequently and by definition would make Him God. Hence, the only one who is qualified for disproving the existence of God empirically, is God himself.

If we continue to apply the sets of laws built by atheists on the logic they have developed, we see a similar result. The "people of science" laud scientism, which is a view that a proposition is not true if it is not proven scientifically. This idea is self-defeating, because the idea of scientism itself can't be proved scientifically. As we dig deeper into atheism we find the immature argument of existence of evil and suffering in the world which sadly, presupposes that a good God wouldn't allow suffering and evil to persist in the world. We have Carl Sagan admirers assuming the eternity of universe, but, unfortunately, their wishy-washy arguments are clearly refuted by the Big Bang theory and the second law of thermodynamics. And then we have the Prophet of Atheism, Richard Dawkins and his book, 'The God Delusion' which simply presents, few rehearsed arguments in a new fancy look. Dawkins considers his best argument to be the 'larger problem' of who designed the designer of the universe [1].

The argument in its entirety is flawed. If the Designer itself has a Designer then the Designer of the Designer would have yet another Designer and so on and on to infinity, which if taken into account from a broad perspective would suggest that the Universe existed forever thereby contradicting with the Big Bang theory. This implies that the Designer is uncreated and therefore eternal.

God's existence is not merely logically promising but also philosophically, very essential. I shall be presenting two arguments in this series (one in this part and one in the next):

Argument from causality: The Quran presents the following argument: "Or were they created by nothing? Or were they the creators (of themselves)? Or did they create heavens and earth? Rather, they are not certain."

Let's scrutinize this verse.

(a) "Or were they created by nothing?."

Created by nothing? Does it sound rational? Forget being rational, is it even close to sane? It's an undeniable philosophical principle that nothing comes out of nothing. Consider an example of, say, a "BOOM"

explosive noise. Obviously, this 'BOOM' sound would have a cause which your curious eyes would look for, in order for something to even BEGIN to exist, it must have a cause/creator.

(b) "Or were they the creators (of themselves)?"

Now that we know, that there must be a cause for any entity which begins to exist, the subsequent question arises who that cause/creator is? Did that very entity create itself? Surely not! Because that would imply that it must exist and not exist at the same time which is logically incoherent. Before proceeding any further, let's quickly summarize the above discussion:

1. Anything which BEGINS to exist has a cause/creator.
2. If Universe began to exist it must have a cause/creator.

Now, let us dissect and confront the concept of the origin of universe. Did it BEGIN to exist or, is it eternal? If the former is true, the conclusion would be that there is a cause/creator of this mind boggling universe, while the latter being the truth would imply that the universe doesn't have any creator/cause. In the light of science, I can assert with full conviction that yes, it did begin to exist. The Second Law of thermodynamics is the irrefutable argument for my claim that the universe had a beginning; this scientific concept is infused with a particular law called the 'law of entropy' which explains the directions of various processes that occur in the natural world. 'Entropy' is a measure of how energy is distributed evenly in a system. For instance, he

at always flows from a body of a higher temperature or energy to one of a lower temperature or energy.

According to the second law of thermodynamics, processes in a closed system tend to go towards higher entropy. If we apply second law of thermodynamics to this universe we would reach the conclusion that the universe must have begun to exist at some point of time, the universe being a closed system. If the universe had never had a beginning of existence (if it was eternal), it would imply that the universe had been existing for an infinite amount of time which would be highly illogical since with so much time this universe would have already been in a state of heat death or 'thermodynamic equilibrium' because when a system is in thermodynamic equilibrium, transfer of energy gets neutralized within. Hence, as the universe continues to expand it will gradually become cold and dead. Since universe is not suffering from any heat death, it can be unambiguously inferred that it must have begun to exist at some point of time.

As is evident from the above argument, the universe did begin to exist. Therefore, it must have a cause/creator just like any other entity. For example, for a chair to begin to exist, it must have a cause/creator which is its carpenter.

As of now, let me draw the inferences:

1. Anything that BEGINS to exist has a cause/creator.
2. Universe began to exist.

to be continued...

NO to FRESH Fruit Juice Shops!

By Mehvish Khan

When the temperature reaches its pinna cle and starts intimidating ones aura of personal comfort and contentment, all one begins to viciously crave for is a chilled, delicious and fresh glass of fruit juice under the blessings of this gut wrenching Delhi heat in order to overcome the prevailing weariness and to finally exude a hugely desired sigh of relief. In such a lethargic atmosphere, an array of fruit juice shops starts coming into life in every nook and cranny of a city that sweats under a relentless fever. A stream of fatigued, thirsty and perspiring faces recklessly rush to the vendors every minute solely to gulp down what they worship as a perfectly healthy source of relief in this inescapable heat. Refreshing and blissful that it may seem on the outside, however one may not feel very relieved when the act is analytically drunk from within. Drinking fruit juices prepared by vendors which is widely rendered and conceived innocuous is in reality one of the seminal agents of unhealthy food consumption.

The aforementioned conclusion is considerably justified and consolidated when a number of significant factors related to the basic concept of drinking fruit juices from vendors are highlighted. From an overall perspective, it is safe to assert that the entire process of preparing, storing and selling fruit juices invites contamination at every level. Delving into the preparation phase of the process, practically all its ingredients undergo spoilage prior to the production of the drink. Scanning them accordingly, the primary constituent, the fruits, which are used in preparing those large glasses of luscious bliss in most cases tend to undergo decay and rotting as they are ignorantly kept open and exposed to different agents of pollution pervading the dirt filled streets in the vendors vicinity. Even washing and soaking them is excluded by the vendor from his chores. Hence, making it not a very healthy choice.

It is essential to wash and soak the fruits before consuming them in any manner. Serving unwashed fruits leads to consumption of pathogens which can weaken our immune system and make one sick and in rare cases also lead to ones death depending on the amount of pathogens inhabiting the fruits. Pathogens are bacteria, viruses and other micro-organisms that cause diseases like gastroenteritis, viral hepatitis, jaundice and diarrhoea to name a few. They are borne by the processing equipment or by irrigation with poor quality water depending on the level of contamination. By washing or soaking the fruits, pathogens and other harmful residues are dissolved because of the TDS (Total dissolved solids) property of water making it safe to eat. Washing them also ensures cleaning pesticide residue which in turn makes the fruit all the more healthier thereby decreasing the consumers risk of getting sick to a much lower level.

The purity and unadulterated condition of the ice cubes and the water used in liquefying and cooling the drink can also be questioned as the confirmation of having obtained them from appropriate and healthy sources is beyond awareness. The drink being fundamentally a business product, it ceases to be treated merely like a beverage when in order to enhance its appeal and taste as well as to meet the demands of the customers, the vendor infuses certain sweeteners along with an excessive amount of sugar and salt to the product; an amount that is estimated to be surpassing the amount of sugar in sweets and candies.

After witnessing an exhibition of all the negative aspects of fruit juices that one preys upon in the streets it would be wise of one to switch to home made juices but without forgetting to soak the fruits half an hour prior to using them. It is an



Marriage in Islam

By Shah Saalib Ahmed Rabbani

When we talk about Islam, we can savour the privilege of being blessed with it's utter simplistic and astonishing straightforwardness. Islam on one hand, condemns fornication and adultery, and it strives to block all possible ways leading to them. On the other hand, it is also against suppressing the sexual urge and hence it calls people to embrace the institution of marriage. The relationship of sexes in pre-Islamic Arabia was shrouded in a state of uncertainty. Regular form of marriage (in the sense as we understand today) was very rare. The form which flourished back then can only be capable of being termed as prostitution or adultery today. Islam reformed these old marriage laws in a far reaching way. With the advent of Islam women began to be perceived under a relatively more positive light and were no more treated as a chattel. In fact, the institution of marriage was now being revered as a custom imbibing both the nature of Ibadat or devotional acts and muamalat or dealings among men.

In Islam the immediate effects of a valid marriage are that the sexual intercourse between the couple becomes lawful and the children born of such a union are legitimate; the wife becomes entitled to dowry; mutual rights to inheritance are established; and the wife becomes entitled to maintenance by the husband.

"...the wife becomes entitled to maintenance by the husband..."

In the context of the ongoing discussion, the effect of the marriage contract which entitles the wife to receive maintenance from her husband is worthy of some explanation.

Due to obvious biological differences, men and women are different. It is this difference which gives men superiority over women in certain aspects and women superiority over men in other aspects. When it comes to family affairs, the perfect Islamic family bears a sharp resemblance to a small state. Just like a state requires a ruler, a guardian or a leader, the Islamic family in its respective realm also needs a leader, a guardian or a ruler. This responsibility can either be given to the husband or to the wife. In Muslim law this responsibility rests with the husband. God says in Quran 4:34:

"Men are the guardians of women..."

It is incumbent on a husband to maintain his wife, whether she is Muslim or Kitabiyah (Jews or Christian), poor or rich, joyed or unjoyed, young or old. When a man and a woman pledges marriage, it is the man who takes the financial responsibility for the woman he is bringing home (Mahr i.e. dowry is one such symbolic expression of this responsibility). Apart from being driven by biological differences man acting as guardian of a woman is a direct consequence of the Islamic Social setup where all the financial responsibilities rest on the shoulder of the men and that the women live a sheltered life.

The outcome is that a woman in Islamic society is always looked after by a male. From birth, this responsibility rests with her father until her marriage. If the father dies, her grandfather or her uncle or her grownup brother has to look after her until her marriage. During marriage, it is the duty of her husband to maintain her. If the marriage ends in divorce or the husband dies she returns to the responsibility of her family. If no one is available her sons have to look after her and if she has no sons, she becomes the responsibility of the head of state.

During these times she enjoys having no financial responsibilities, her share of inheritance from her premarital and post marital guardians and her Mahr to which she is entitled to after marriage.

to be continued...

BOOK REVEALS

Being an ITian and more importantly someone from the technical field, I think it was expected of me that my writing would imbibe something severely scientific which would smugly render a deep sense of complication, incomprehensibility and boredom. This mere general perception about authors jutting out from the scientific background and particularly books celebrating the dimensions of science has led to the exclusion of many great and (dare I say) interesting works from the reading list of the youth. Though this general perception may be true in some cases, for example in the works of Robin Cook, which might make you doze off now and then, "Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" by Douglas Adams will instead have you rolling on the floor with contagious laughter.

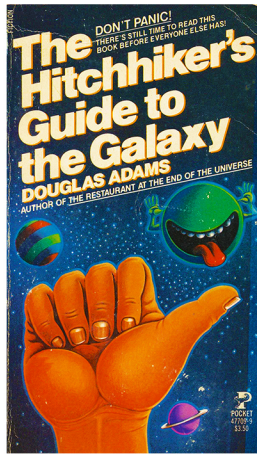
Consider this, if the life goal of the book's lead character is "to have a wonderfully great time and nothing less", and on top of that if he is a two headed alien who happens to be the President of the universe, who is crazier than your craziest friend high on Tequila, it would appear to me that the book

would be a fun read despite being a science fiction. Yes it is a science fiction, but only as much as a tomato is a fruit (surprised?) In all intents and purposes Hitchhiker's guide is a classic example of ruthless British humor and is profusely blunt, eccentric, thought provoking and at times 'batsht' crazy. Have you come across a book where aliens destroy a planet to make way for a hyper galactic bypass and which claims that the earth was actually run by bats and mice?

The story principally follows the adventures of four people, Arthur Dent and Tricia MacMillan, both who are inhabitants of earth, Ford Prefect (who named himself after the Ford Prefect car to blend in with what was assumed to be the dominant life form, automobiles) and Zaphod Beeblebrox (Ford's semi-cousin and the Galactic President). Their adventures are shared (very distastefully though) by a humanoid possessing emotional issues, Marvin the paranoid android. The plot of the story is essentially engaging which frequently captivates the reader's mind. The larger portion of the story is set in outer space and the characters ingrained in it would make you cogitate that if such a world existed, you would get on the next spaceship to explore it. I mean personally would, just to meet the Doors. "All the doors in the spaceship have a cheerful and sunny disposition. It is their pleasure to open for you, and their satisfaction to close again with the knowledge of a job well done."

Douglas Adams has a vivid, lively and sharply satirical imagination with droll wit, a keen eye for details and heavy doses of insights. He makes us embark on a series of laughter until we cry. Consider this instance where he describes the worst poetry recitation, "Vogon poetry is of course the worst in the Universe. The second worst is that of the Azoghs of Kria. During a recitation by their Poet Master Grunthos, of the Flatulent, (Flatulent!) of his poem "Ode to a Small Lump of Green Putty I Found in My Armpit One Midsummer Morning", four members of his audience died of internal hemorrhaging, and the President of the Mid-Galactic Artistic Nobility Council survived by gnawing one of his own legs off. Grunthos is reported to have been "disappointed" by the poem's reception, and was about to embark on a reading of his twelve book epic entitled My Favorite Bathtime Gurgles when his own major intestine, in a desperate attempt to save life and civilization, leaped straight up through his neck and landed in his brain." Now if you are wondering who or rather what are Vogons, pick up a copy and dig in.

The book harbors numerous passages that are remarkably humorous not solely because of the witty use of language, but also because of the unexpected popping up every now and then. The art of exaggeration is pleasantly exploited to a great extent in the book. You might be reading about hyper galactic space travel in one paragraph and the next thing you know, you would find yourself deeply confronting the thoughts and inner musings of a whale asphyxiating in the empty vacuum of outer space. The book also expresses a love for philosophy if the reader manages to sense it.



Finally if you are looking for the answer to life, universe and everything, Hitchhiker's guide is the book for you. I hope you will like the answer that awaits at the end.

By Miding Pertin

A SILENT ENGAGEMENT

The creaking voice of the disregarded unbolted door calls for my concern as I sit in my room, my tired eyes affixed to my laptop screen. The gentle breeze that agitates the flapping of the door, manages to flow in and smear a layer of sensuousness on my skin. The door has to thank the breeze as the sensual feeling stimulates me to give a fragment of heed to the door's uncomfortable posture when I contemplate bolting it back.

Obedying my instincts, when I grip the sides of my chair in an act to erect myself gearing up for paying the necessary service, my sharp ears instinctively arrest familiar sounds of human feet being dragged approaching from somewhere beyond the door, which I realize could only resonate with the lethargic nature of a certain person who is a very well-known occupant of my mind. I immediately revert to my former posture sensing his arrival, relaxed that it would be him doing the door the favor.

As predicted, the source behind the approaching sound becomes finally visible in the form of a twenty something years old human being now standing right at the creaking door fixing his eyes on me as he

strides into the room. The door leaks out a loud and final creak when the person shuts it, precluding the in-flowing soothing breeze from further engagements which would be very shortly taking place within the confines of the room walls. Soundless, the room is now principally ornamented with the aura that the new entrant commands as he walks over and sits on the chair beside me. With elegance, his slender legs cross each other making his sitting posture look uneasy yet his facial gesture suggest otherwise. As if by magic, he plucks out a cigarette from what looked like his pant pocket and comfortably lights it up, unconcerned by the danger and harm involved in igniting it. With each puff he takes, his filthy looking face strive to seem more thoughtful and the mere act of smoking tends to paint a layer of originality on his expression and gradually all over him. The smoke that he sings out, a fragrance which I still haven't accustomed to, invokes an urge in me to bestow him with an unfavorable response but the feeling soon dies out and is replaced by another, but strangely this time, it is that of a faint mixture of admiration and curiosity.

This time when I land my gaze upon him, I see calmness and charisma superseding the filth and foulness that usually stained his aura. Accompanying this change in perspective is a curious desire to experience the same aura that he is presently adorned with. His dark thick lips continue to mate with the diminishing cigarette as I scan him from head to toe not in an act of savoring his body features but to consume and get a taste of the cream of his perso-

na. I impel my coward eyes to get a closer look into his mannerisms in an attempt to discover what he really possesses that is making me go gaga over him. But corresponding to the story of my life where timings invariably hatch premature, my search for the answer goes astray when he finally breaks the silence that had been disrespectfully hovering over us. "What you looking at?" says he, a sort of a delayed question I interpret when the tone in his voice and his accompanying facial expression marries my intellect. Now unrehearsed for shyness and embarrassment, I try normalizing the situation with a response involving a head shake to imply a 'nothing' along with a verbal affirmation. A feebly expressed laugh is what he gives back which I perceive to be seemingly carrying traces of his knowledge about the ongoing commotions in my mind.

A patronizing stare that follows along with the laugh adjacently diminishing into an equally patronizing smile, makes me dwell upon the probability of the aforementioned perception being true. The stare becomes unifying and dominating, urging me to evade his line of vision. I am compelled to lower my gaze, sensing a feeling of inferiority but his eyes continue to rape my ego. His gleaming stare lays an imaginary grip around me restricting my movement and confining me to a small uncomfortable space. It inexplicably delves into my body and tightly crushes my heart squeezing out heaps of blood of courage and confidence. My trembling mind sympathizes with my situation but is unable to conjure up a shield to block those stares away. I am unable to project my inner self as I try developing a fake mannerism in order to combat his stare. Those eyes of

his easily pierce through the facade that I try to erect hoping it would help in concealing my uneasiness from him. What subsequently follows is a long act of puppeteering which he, the puppeteer performs through his eyes with me, the puppet. I conceive that I am being played but without any strings attached to my vulnerable body.

Languishing side by side in a small corner of a cigarette smoke filled room, both of us share this brief relationship of master and servant with the servant incapable of getting out of his master's clutches. Moment by moment, after few miserable seconds pass by, he suddenly gets up, the smile still stuck on his face, pauses and looks at me for a brief moment, turns around, walks up to the door, opens it and beamingly paces out of the room, the sound of his foot dragging re-emerging, but this time retreating. Having been just spitted out of his aura, I quickly retrieve my composure and regain myself. I heave an unexpected sigh and ponder why I just let it out. Turning back to my laptop, I try to re-immers myself in calmness and serenity and within no time I am successful. The atmosphere is indeed tranquil, a deep contrast to what it was when there were two people in the room. Few seconds flow by and the door starts creaking again.



If wishes were horses, beggars would ride but if those horses denied to concur what would one ride. Possibly or rather strangely shy out to the chesterfields of the political edifice of the country (Parliament) and serve such an ale to the masses that they take their essence dusted and tattered to a ballad box. Lo and Behold! After some time the reigns of the nation's limping stallion i.e governance comes into their hands and poor masses hoping that they will correct the limp of the stallion than hoping it will trot in a different way like a bridegroom's horse cautiously stepping on the ornate pavement or sticking out its neck for every garland and wreath.

A brouhaha has enshrouded the nation, there is sloganeering going on rampant and high, the political leaders are trying their incantations, the supporters are flocking roads and streets, the children are amazed at the gush and the zeal, the youth is impulsive, dreamy and in want. The old lady busy with her chores hopes a miracle for her only son, the old white haired man with legs flickering bright plods down the street mouthing that I need to go for work as I have to feed many mouths. But the eyes which have already witnessed the travesty years back, pass smiles and their eyes without lustre claim that they don't read complacency; but the ease with which the political leaders can time and again befooled the masses and make them doodle on their tones. I wish the "Pied Piper of Hamelin" and his flute had existed today. Not only would have he driven scores of mice along with him but also humans dancing and acting whimsical.

Now that the elections are over and the results are evident, the failures have cringes, the victors laugh their way out. What lies unchanged are the aspirations of commoners and what lies unfazed are the hopes of the masses in totality that – their issues would be addressed, their problems would be catered, there would be glory at large, there would be an ease by and by, the shrewd monster of corruption would lose its teeth, that the tide of inflation would spare them at large, that the judiciary would retract its strayed spine, that the government would set its skewed eyes straight and see into the misery and wounds of the people at large. The hopes all linger, the hearts all cherish a dream – the dream of prosperity, the dream of harmony, the dream of solidarity, a longing for unity, socio-political parity, peace, employment, development, justice, law & order, freedom of religion & expression and above all the freedom to live happily and unchained.

Last heard that politics is the refuge of a mediocre but what if the same mediocre lot happens to rule the ocean of hopeful (but helpless) people; or lead the caravan of natives and gypsies or decide the fate of all whether they participate in the process of elections or prune this onus alike. Need not the potent, the competent, the efficient, the learned and the zealous younger lot of the people come instead and try it out on the rugged turf of politics. I look up in awe and quest at a genie which smokes out of some old lamp giving a reverent nod and telling me, "Deliver your aspirations out!". As I ask the gracious phantom its name, it smiles and says, "I am democracy, my lord!". And then after a brief pause the voice adds, "My lord, be the change you want to see in me".

*"Woods are lovely, dark and deep,
but I have promises to keep and miles"*

Robert Frost

The Political Melodrama Unraveled!

By Dr. Syed Raja Junaid

MEET THE TEAM

Designed by Arsalan Khan



Aprajita Laroia
FOUNDER/EDITOR

Saaid Ahmed
FOUNDER/EDITOR



Miding Pertin
EDITOR



Imtiyaz Khanday
FOUNDER/COLUMNIST



Anurag Bhatt
COLUMNIST



Mehvish Khan
COLUMNIST



Arsalan Khan
DESIGNER



Contact Us

Phone: +91-8468880001

Email: kathabaat@gmail.com

Disclaimer

Kathabaat holds no responsibility about the contents present on its pages. The views and opinions presented are those of the author penning them down. Kathabaat maintains neutrality to whatever content it receives. Since Kathabaat doesn't belong to any religious group or a political organisation and that we don't believe in censorship, we publish whatever we get and from whosoever we get it. In case you find anything that is factually incorrect or something that goes against your ethics or something that can hurt sentiments of a particular section of the society or you find a critique of a particular religion or thought on our website, we request you to leave a message with us or forward one to the author. Kathabaat however doesn't assure any change in any kind of content present on the website.

We believe in pure intellectualism and we try to encourage debates and discussions. We welcome responses and reviews from our readers. If you disagree with any publication of "Kathabaat", write a review and forward it to us, if it meets our guidelines and fits the standard of writing, we will not hesitate publishing your views.

Kathabaat is the reader's magazine. You are always welcome to write for us.

